RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

W. A. LAMBERT

BRARY OF RELIGIOUS THOUGHT

Religious Education

AND

FOR THE HEALING OF THE CHURCH

BY

W. A. LAMBERT

BOSTON: RICHARD G. BADGER
TORONTO: THE COPP CLARK CO., LIMITED

The Gorham Press, Boston, U. S. A.

CONTENTS

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JOHN GERHARD in his Locus XXIV writes: "They who are to be promoted to the ministry of the Church must first be taught and trained in schools. For since the fall of man a salutary knowledge of God is not innate in man, nor is the sufficiency (ἱκανοτης) required in the ministry given to any one immediately without previous instruction. Therefore if the magistrates desire to have suitable ministers of the Church, let them have diligent care for the schools. The schools are the seminaries and nurseries of the Church." (*ed.* Preuss, 6, 354.)

An analysis of these sentences will show us how entirely foreign to our modern American conditions the standpoint of Gerhard is. Gerhard holds that the magistracy and the ministry of the Church are two co-ordinate 'hierarchies.' State and Church are co-extensive and divide between them the functions of government. But the State must provide men for the ministry. The schools exist primarily for the training of ministers. A comparatively short time ago this was the theory of the Church College in America, and in the minds of some people it still survives. But the Church College had no connection with the State and could have none, because of the fundamental American principle of the separation of State and Church. Gerhard's statement had to be

modified so as to read, 'if the Church desires suitable ministers of the Church, it must have diligent care for the establishment and maintenance of schools.'

Gerhard based his view upon Luther, and adds Luther's second argument for the maintenance of schools, although not in Luther's name: "because, according to the philosopher, the correct training of the youth is the foundation of the State." Luther's words are: "Since the wealth and honor of the entire city and the lives of all the citizens are entrusted to the magistrates, they would not be dealing honorably before God or men if they did not with all their power plan for the prosperity and advancement of the city. But the prosperity of a city does not lie only in the gathering of great treasure, the building of solid walls, beautiful houses and the purchase of great stores of armor and ammunition; indeed, if there is an abundance of all these things, and fools control it, the city suffers so much the greater injury. The best and richest prosperity of a city, its salvation and strength, is this: that it have many excellent, learned, sensible, honorable and well-educated citizens, who in time may gather, hold and rightly use both treasures and wealth." (*Works, ed.* Buchwald, 3, 13.)

For the common people Luther thought an hour or two in school each day sufficient. "My opinion is that the boys should be sent to school an hour or two each day, and should keep right on working at home the rest of the time, learn their trades and do what is asked of them, so that the two go hand in hand; for they are young and need not hurry." (Buchwald, 3, 27.) Thus Luther anticipated the modern idea of vocational training, with-

out burdening the school with it, however.

It seems strange that Luther in neither of his treatises on the establishment of public schools speaks specifically of the religious education of the child. His catechisms were not written for the school, but for 'pastors and teachers,' as the preface to the Small Catechism says, and for 'house-fathers,' as the headings of the various parts say. Even Gerhard looks to the ministers and not to the schools for the religious training of the children.

Furthermore, Luther nowhere tells how instruction is to help the religious development of the child. On one point he is very clear: "no one can be compelled to believe." (Buchwald, 3, 84.) The Catechism itself is to teach and the children are to learn from it "what is right and what is wrong among those with whom the children intend to dwell and live. For he who wants to live in a city must know and observe the law of the city whose benefits he desires to enjoy, whether he believe or be at heart a rascal." (*ibid.* The translation of this passage given in the Church Book and in the English Book of Concord is not accurate, but attempts to avoid a theological, and partly a linguistic difficulty. The Latin translation should have made both clear.)

Elsewhere Luther emphasised the teaching value of history. "It would be most profitable for rulers that they read or have read to them, from youth on, the histories both in sacred and in profane books, in which they would find more examples and skill in ruling than in all the books of law; as we read that the kings of Persia did, Esther vi. For examples and histories benefit and teach

more than the laws and statutes: there actual experience teaches, here untried and uncertain words." (*On Good Works,* Eng. Transl., 1, 265f.) He complains: "How greatly do I regret that I did not read more poets and histories, and no one taught me them." (Buchwald, 3, 26.),

But of religious instruction during the century and a half after the Reformation, Kabisch gives this summary account: "Preachers, teachers, parents, children, all took no interest in it. Frequently the help of the police had to be called upon to get the children to go to 'Kinderlehre.'" "The best that can be said of this instruction has been said by Wiese (*Der ev. Religionsunterricht im Lehrplan der höheren Schulen,* S. 141): "The religious element in the school for a long time retained the character of a drilling in the chief means of devotion, Bible reading, catechisation and Church song.'" (Kabisch, *Wie Lehren wir Religion?* 284f.) Life and interest was brought into religious instruction by the Pietests. Justus Gesenius had published a Bible History of the Old and New Testaments in 1658, but it attracted little attention. John Locke in England suggested the use of the historical portions of the Bible and the preparation of selected Bible stories for this purpose. (1693). August Hermann Francke in 1702 made the same suggestion, but included in his plan of a *Catechismus historicus* historical illustrations from profane history. In 1714 Joh. Hübner published 'Twice Fifty-two select Bible Stories.' Some Sunday School helps of very recent years seem directly modeled on Hübner's precedent. Hübner's book flourished for

a century, until Zahn's Biblical Histories of 1831 supplanted it. And the influence of Zahn's work for good and for evil in a pedagogical sense lasts until the present. (For these historical statements, see Kabisch, *Wie Lehren wir Religion?*)

Like Luther, his followers for more than a hundred years had not raised the question, how religious education influences religious life? The Catechism contained the essential elements of the Word of God, and the Word of God in a mysterious way creates faith in the heart. Hence they did not go beyond the Catechism in their teaching. Even the Bible Histories were introduced only as illustrations of the Catechism. "I have often been able to grasp, as it were with my hands, what a light the biblical histories throw upon the Catechism, when, e. g., in explaining the fourth Commandment I told the children how the priest Eli broke his neck because he had trained his children poorly, how the untrained Absalom was caught by his hair in the oak tree, and how the lost son at last had to eat husks with the swine." (Hübner, Preface, quoted by Kabisch.) Here again we have a thought of Luther applied where Luther apparently had not applied it. For Luther wrote in his treatise, 'That the Doctrines of Men are to be rejected': "The other books of the Bible do no more than give the instances in which the word of Moses was kept or not kept; the words and the histories are different, but the meaning and the teaching is one and the same." (Buchwald, 2, 294.)

When we come to a Bible study for the sake of knowledge of the Bible, we have advanced far beyond Luther

and far beyond Hübner. The Bible stories taught and illustrated Bible truths. But Hübner aimed not only to put the truth into the minds of the children; he wanted to influence their lives. After the child has learned the facts and has been taught to think about them and to learn the ethical and religious lessons contained in them, "we must not fold our hands, but so influence the will and the heart of the child that it, in view of this knowledge, may choose the good and reject the evil. This is indeed the most difficult point, since this is where the hypocrites and the truth which is in Jesus, rather, what amounts to the same thing, the Christianity of the mouth and the Christianity of the heart, separate." (Hübner, quoted by Kabisch.) Hübner looks for religious, not purely intellectual results of religious education, and agrees with Francke that the means to reach religious results is direct admonition. In place of the mysterious working of the Word, we have now the teacher's efforts.

Between these two conceptions religious instruction has wavered since that time. Our present-day Sunday School literature, and even more our Sunday School teaching, has laid considerable emphasis upon the direct admonition. It has added however another element, which is foreign to both Luther and Hübner. Religious education is to be based upon the Bible as the Word of God, and is to bring to the child the whole of the Bible as far as possible. Religious instruction is to be instruction in and about the Bible, to which is to be added a knowledge of the teachings and usages of the particular Church. The child is to be prepared as far as possible for active and intelligent

Church membership.

In America we have had so little experience with religious education that it will pay us to learn from Germany. What has been the result of religious education there? Religion has been given a place in the school curriculum, has been taught as thoroughly as other branches of study. Its purpose has been to make intelligent Christians and Church-members.

'Upon the basis of facts known to everyone' Natorp regards it certain that in ninety-nine out of a hundred cases the dogmatic conviction is not acquired. And Hans Richert in referring to this statement adds: "And the many who are not convinced then look back upon the instruction in religion as a provoking deception, a criminal abuse of their childish credulity." (*Handbuch f.d. Religionsunterricht,* 1.) Fritz Mauthner complains that in spite of the religious education "really religious feelings are very rare; even rarer are men whose world-view, whose fundamental attitude toward life is essentially religious." (Quoted by Gurlitt, *Die Schule,* 15.) Among theologians Beyschlag asked years ago, "What demands are made upon us by the observation that in spite of the return of theology to the Confessions of the Church so little spiritual life is manifested in the congregations?" (PRE^3 23, 195^{55}.) We are all familiar with the 'unchurchliness' of Germany, the large parishes and small congregations, the growing social-democracy, the spread of monism. Of course, we may ascribe part of this retrogression, if we may so call it, to the criticism and liberalism of the universities. But this has not affected the religious

education of the schools, except in so far as it had made the position of the teacher almost untenable. The teacher is required to teach the doctrines of the State-Church, not what the university professor has taught. In fact, the teacher has less liberty than the preacher, as is so bitterly complained: "The teacher is in a far more difficult position than the preacher. The preacher can take out of the Bible text what he wants and accommodate his sermon to the intellectual attainments of his hearers. If the teacher wants to be conscientious and not merely repeat empty words, he must adhere to the content and meaning of the material of religious instruction as given in the Bible, Catechism and hymn-book, and make that meaning clear. He has no right to explain the words in a liberal sense." (Jahn, *Sittlichkeit und Religion,* 306.) In the discussion of principles, Reukauf pleads for a greater freedom for the teacher, and says: "In the case of the teacher no less than in that of the preacher the power of the organized Church is limited by the evangelical conscience of the individual, by his conviction formed by personal study in the Scriptures upon the basis of the confession of Jesus as the Redeemer of men. Yes, the evangelical teacher of religion even has the duty, on the basis of the personal conviction, "die Schäden der Kirche zu heilen," cf. Palmer's Article *'Kirche,'* in Schmid's *Encykl. des gesamten Erziehungs und Unterrichtswesens.* But in any case we regard it as not only practicable, but as a necessary demand of evangelical freedom, that the Church entirely refrain from every direct supervision over religious instruction, as it has, e. g., in the duchy of Co-

burg for almost thirty years." (*Didaktik des ev. Religionsunterrichts in der Volksschule*[2], 1906, p. 20.)

Upon the older view of the dogmaticians, that the Word is efficacious in a mysterious way, the uncomfortable position of the teacher could not harm the pupil. Surely the German system as it has stood for years does store the mind of the child with Bible texts and Catechism and hymns. If the religious results do not follow, either the theory of a mysterious efficacy is wrong, or else God has forsaken His Word in Germany. We cannot blame the Germans if they prefer the former explanation and are agitating in favor of a reform of religious education.

When we examine more closely however, we can readily see that this agitation for a reform of religious education is only part of a larger agitation for the reform of education in general. In Germany as in America education has been overwhelmed by the demands of new knowledge and new industrial conditions. At least yearly there is a new subject which urges its demands for recognition; and the cry that our schools are impractical, that they do not prepare boys and girls for actual life is perennial. Especially in America we have almost come to the point of not educating at all, simply because of the mass of educational material brought to our attention. Going into some city school and observing the constant change of studies, the rush of work, one might well ask, What is it all about?

That is exactly the question which German educators have come to ask. They must find some definite aim of education, which will help them to find their way

among the many theories and fads concerning the content and the method of education. At times it may have seemed that the purpose of education was merely the prevention of illiteracy, the enabling of every man and woman to read and write. To-day many ask of education only a direct preparation for a life-work, or, to put it more grossly, for making a living. For either of these ends religious education is a very poor help, and might be ignored. But ability to read and to write may be only ability to do greater mischief. An education which prepares directly for a life-work makes of man only a machine, not necessarily even a mechanic. An educator cannot be satisfied with either aim.

"The best that parents and teachers together can do, is this: To lay firm foundations in the pupils on which they can later in their own way, in the battle with the world, develop themselves into ethical personalities of character." (W Rein, *Das Kind,* II, 3.) In these words an educator has summed up his idea of the purpose of an education. Years before Pestalozzi had formulated it thus: "The development of human powers to pure human wisdom." Paulsen defines it thus: "Spiritual self-dependence of a man upon the plane of the culture attainable by him." (Kabisch, 4f.) Or, as Paulsen states it in his *Pädagogik,* 6f: "Education consists in handing down from the parents to the succeeding generation the ideal content of culture."

If we analyse we will find that education has two distinct although inseparable purposes. On the one hand it aims at the formation of character, on the other at

the preparation for a useful life. The one aim is personal, the other is social. But the two are inseparable: the social aim can be reached only through the personal, the personal only through the social. It is of course a patent fact that there are many useful citizens whose personal character is exceedingly faulty, just as there are many men and women of personally beautiful character who are socially inactive. But a general education can neither aim to produce professional politicians nor to develop hermits. Both of these are, as it were, by-products of education.

In America we have a state-controlled system of public education. For a state-school society is practically synonymous with the state, so that we may define the purpose of education as the training of the child for good and useful citizenship. The child is to become able through its education to take an intelligent part in the work of the world under the conditions which exist in the particular country: it is at the same time to be enabled to remain a distinct personality, and not simply to become a cog in the impersonal machinery of modern progress.

How this purpose must affect and modify educational efforts in general, we need not stop to inquire. Here we are interested in religious education and must try to determine the need and the place of such education within the system of general education.

An ethical question however needs first to be considered. Are we to consider the problem of religious education as Christians, as Church-men, or as citizens? If as Christians, then we have nothing to do with the general prob-

lem of state education. We may, if we so desire, withdraw our children from the public school; but we cannot force upon the public school or upon education a view which is rooted and grounded only in Christianity. Frank in his System of Ethics has stated the matter clearly: "Christian activity within a state, within the civil society which the state embraces, cannot possibly be so defined that it would always aim to bring the Christian *ethos* to bear upon civil conditions and laws. On this point there are still many mistaken views among Christians. Men think that a Christian ruler, a Christian authority must immediately create 'Christian' institutions in the state, e. g., pass 'Christian' marriage laws, establish 'Christian' schools, demand a 'Christian' Sunday observance. . . . These are well-meant, but nonsensical velleities. God did not force His Son upon the world, and He does not wish His *ethos* to be impressed upon the world by force. The natural thing is that all state institutions bear the character of that *ethos* which is the average *ethos* of the community." (*Sittlichkeit,* II, 445.) J. N. Figgis has recently expressed the same truth: "As members of the State we have to think and to vote for what is the wisest course in a nation of which many of the Christians refuse to submit to our (Church) discipline, and many are not Christian at all. As citizens we have no right or claim to appeal to motives or ideals specifically Christian, or to lay down lines of policy which have no meaning except from the standpoint of the Catholic Church. We must recognize facts even where we do not like them." (*Churches in the Modern State,* 113.) Not as Chris-

tians, but as Christian citizens must we consider our problem.

But religious education appears to many to be a specific function of the Church, to be considered by us as members of the Church. Religious education is to be education for Church membership. This is perfectly true from a Roman Catholic standpoint, and the Roman Catholic Church is perfectly consistent when it maintains its parochial schools for this definite form of education. Two implications must be remembered however. In the Roman Catholic system the Church is the intermediary between God and man. Man can know and please God only through the Church. Outside of that specific Church there is no salvation. Protestants hold an altogether different view of the Church and cannot base their view of education for Church membership upon any such theory. Furthermore the Roman Catholic Church is not at home in the modern world. Modern culture is for it unchristian. As its ideal it holds to the culture of the middle ages, and tries to compromise as little as possible with twentieth century culture. But this modern culture is to a large extent the outgrowth of the Protestant Churches, which claim that Christianity can flourish in every development of culture. If Protestant Churches repudiate modern culture they thereby deny their own right to existence, for Protestantism was the modification of Christianity made necessary by a changing culture in the Sixteenth Century. Either Christianity can flourish in any culture, or it should not have changed from the medieval Church.

If modern culture is not Christian and the Church cannot approve of it, then we must side not with Martin Luther, but with the *Viri obscuri* of the sixteenth century and with the pope's anti-modernism of to-day. Then our only hope lies not in religious education, but in the destruction of modern education. We can keep our children only if we keep them from the school and from modern thought and knowledge.

But education for Church membership is not, as some would have us believe, education for life everlasting. Church membership, except on the Roman Catholic principle, is purely an earthly thing. Christians are not saved because they are loyal to the Church; they become loyal to the Church because they are saved. No amount of knowledge or of Church doctrines will save a man. A right understanding of the doctrine of justification by faith is perfectly consistent with the statement that a man is saved by what he is and not by what he knows. "Faith justifies alone without works, but faith is never alone," is equivalent to saying that faith, which is trust in God, saves by making a man a godly man. Education for intelligent Church membership which is not education to character and for modern life is a logical impossibility. Only a shortsighted policy on the part of Churchmen would save the Church by making it unworthy to be saved. If the Church does not exist for the saving of men and of society and of men in society, but asks that men and society exist to maintain it and must be modified to suit this purpose, the Church will merely lose its influence and drag the influence of the Gospel, as far as

possible, with its own.

Not as Christians, attempting to legislate Christianity into institutions or into men, nor as Churchmen, attempting to save the Church, but as Christian citizens must we consider the problems of religious education.

Is education for intelligent living in our modern world and for the maintenance of an ethical personality in the modern world possible without religious education? Or, to state the question in the words of Kabisch: "Does a man have a right to a religious education?" Kabisch makes the answer depend upon our solution of several other questions: "Is religion a means of power in the battle for existence? Is it a valuable, perhaps the most valuable possession we have in life? Or is it a non-essential ornament, which can be dispensed with without our suffering real harm in life?" And Kabisch replies: "He who holds that religion is a weapon that helps solve the problems of life and overcome its difficulties, its temptations, its end, must confess: man has a right to religion, as well as to a roof that will protect him against wind and storm. This may well be pondered by those who are all too meek in their assertion of the universal rights of man and fear too much the growth of excessive power in the state and therefore ascribe to the parents the right of leaving their children without religious training. All respect for the rights of the parents; no one compels them to a faith which they do not want; but has the child itself no rights? Does it belong to the parents just like a piece of dead property? That were the abolition of the most elementary ideas of right!" (*Wie*

Lehren wir Religion? p. 2.)

The child unquestionably has a right to a religious education, just as it has a right to education in the best culture of the time. If the Church excludes it from culture, the Church is wrong; if the state excludes it from religion, the state is wrong.

But the difficulty lies in the reconciliation of the religion of the Church with the culture of the state. A division of education between state and Church will always be unsatisfactory for this reason. The very first element of a personality is unity. But if the state teaches culture and the Church teaches doctrines opposed to that culture, how can the child combine the two within itself? To save its personality it must reject either culture or the Church,—and a touch with culture is for most men too valuable and too real a thing to be rejected.

Can religion and culture be reconciled? This is the fundamental question. And here we may grant that the theology of the sixteenth century and the science of the twentieth century cannot be reconciled, simply because the sixteenth century theology contains elements of an outgrown culture. If this is the inevitable contrast, the Church must take over not only religious education, but all education for its children, and will even then lose the majority of those who will later grow to understand the real questions at issue. Sadder yet, the faithful ones will either be weak in the world of culture, forever unable to reach the Brahmans, or divided in themselves, unable to reconcile two elements of their knowledge, of divided allegiance and at bottom dishonest with themselves. Self-

interest in the world will make them accept the progress of the age, and self-interest for the future will lead them to accept the teachings of the Church. A whole-hearted allegiance can be given to neither, as we can see everywhere in the Roman Catholic Church of to-day.

The problem of the reconciliation of religion, or rather of our religious conceptions, with the culture of our day is by no means easy of solution. Men are struggling with it and making progress. The first and the longest step in the progress has been merely a return to Luther. Faith is trust in God: religion can be summed up in "faith, love, and trust in God above all things." It is a personal attitude, which gives unity to a man's life and a firm anchorage for his soul in all trials. It is in its essence personal, or, if you will, subjective.

As we saw above, Luther could not understand how faith could be taught. The Word of God could be taught, the Spirit of God must work faith. The result was that in time religion was confused with the intellectual apprehension of religious truth. But that intellectual apprehension is evidently entirely distinct from the trust in God which is faith. They could be confused only so long as there was no conflict between the religious truths so apprehended and scientific truths, so that all could be taken as given on the authority of God. When once religious truths and scientific truths conflict, intellectual belief cannot coincide with personal trust. If I believe the Word of God because I trust in God, I must believe all of it. If I trust in God because I believe the Word of God, I must believe all of the Word of God.

For Luther, as we have seen, the Word of God was the promises of God. "For Luther the entire content of Scripture including that which concerns the true inner attitude of the heart toward God is Law, in so far as it comes to the sinner as a demand upon him, and the same content including the Old Testament legal commandments is Gospel, in so far as it is a promise of grace for the sinner." (Heim, *Gewissheitsproblem,* 250.) Luther does not think of scientific or historical statements of the Bible, but of the religious content of the Scriptures. Not the book is for him the Word of God, but the Law and Gospel of the book. It was this Law and Gospel which he summed up in the Catechism as sufficient religious instruction for the young, and of which he himself confessed that he had never fully learned it.

What Luther wanted therefore was a spiritual effect upon the heart and life of the child through the Word of God. As he was neither psychologist nor trained pedagogue, he did not puzzle with the process by which God through the Word works faith. This problem modern educators and psychologists have undertaken to study.

Their results we may state briefly. Religion cannot be developed in the child by the teaching of facts as such, by dogmatic teaching, or by admonition. "Certainly the purpose of religious educators demands knowledge. But knowledge has only the value of a means. The purpose aimed at is the direction of the heart and will toward the divine." (Wiese, quoted by Kabisch, 66.) There is in every child a religious tendency: there are experiences which in their nature are religious. These need to be

interpreted, to be developed, to be correlated to the religious experience of older persons and of the leaders of religious life and thought. Here again Luther's Catechism pointed the way. The child, seeing and hearing of religious matters, is supposed to ask for further guidance in understanding them, and the father gives that guidance by telling what he knows and has experienced.

Religious education is therefore the training and deepening of the religious life of the child by means of the religious experience of others. The Bible becomes the means of religious instruction because in it we have the religious experiences of prophets and apostles which are typical for all time. Religious education is one continuous process of teaching by example and by communing in imagination with the saints. As God has dealt with them, and as they have dealt with God, so we, although under different circumstances, deal with God, and so God deals with us. "All the hours of religious instruction mean only a gathering of religious experience with the help of the imagination. The ethical and religious heroes rise before the soul of the child, those who gradually through the darkness of obscure acts of worship prepared the way for a worship of God in spirit and in truth." (Kabisch, 113.) The purpose after all is to lead the child to worship God in spirit and in truth. If there is much which would hinder such worship, which would confuse the child, or lead it to doubt and difficulty, we with our broader knowledge should save the child even if it be at the cost of self-denial to ourselves. The doctrines of the Church, the niceties of theology, are not religion: they should be

helps to religion and explanations of religion. When they cease to be helps, and as explanations of our religion are not true, it is better to ignore them than by asserting them to destroy faith, which is trust in God.

The child has a right to religion and therefore to religious education. Who shall educate the child in religion? There is really only one answer possible: whoever educates the child. If the child is educated at home, the family is the place for religious education; if the Church educates the child, certainly the Church must provide it with religious education; if the state educates it, it is the business of the state to educate, and not simply to teach: and to education religion is indispensable.

How shall the opposition of the Churches be overcome? Let us ask first, where does the opposition of the Churches come from? Naturally we think first of the Roman Catholic Church. But that Church already has her parochial schools, and teaches religion in them. It is a religion which is not at home in the modern world, which is not in sympathy with our modern democracy. To maintain itself it needs the parochial school. But if the Church is wise, she will see that a faith in God helps her as much as it helps any other Church. The Roman Catholic Church will not protest against the development of God-fearing character; what she protests against is sectarian teaching which antagonises her distinctive teaching. True, so long as the Roman Church does not look with more approval upon modern views of life, it may be necessary to maintain parochial schools. But the state should in all fairness to Roman Catholic citizens maintain these schools

and maintain in them the same standard of instruction as is maintained in the Public School.

"The Protestant Churches cannot agree upon a purely religious, non-denominational instruction in religion." To hold that this is a final attitude of the Protestant Churches, would be to admit that the Churches are more concerned for themselves than for the children. To argue that the Churches would be disloyal to the truth they have, if they admitted a non-denominational training in religion, is to place intellectual formulation of the truth higher than religion itself. In fact, the Church can expect an intelligent appreciation of its distinctive teachings only upon the basis of a common Christian faith, i. e., upon the foundation of a religious experience such as can be gained and developed by a study of the dealings of God with men and of men with God apart from the doctrines and dogmas of the Church.

If our Churches had this foundation in a common Christian faith, or if you will, in a common Christian religious experience, the Churches could train their younger members for intelligent and active Church membership, whereas now it is confessedly difficult for the Churches to do any educational work among the masses of their membership.

Dietrich Vorwerk in his book, *Kann auch ein Pastor selig werden?* writes, (p. 82): "Not the impartation of a system of dogmatics is the aim of instruction, but educational development of Christian personalities by means of drawing them to Jesus." However we may otherwise disagree among ourselves and with Vorwerk, this defini-

tion of the aim of religious education can be generally accepted. If we add to it the principle stated by Stange in his little work on *Christentum und moderne Weltanschauung,* p. 3: "The representatives of Christianity would not do justice to their task, if they wanted to see in the modern world-view nothing but an evil and a danger. Whoever emphasises history as much as Christianity does, cannot desire to become 'geschichtslos,' " we shall have the two fundamental principles which must guide us in our study of the problem of religious education: the development of religious Christian personalities able to take their place in the modern world.

The application of these principles, it is true, is no simple matter. It involves a general 'reform' of our schools in more ways than one. And, although it were easy to indicate some of the reforms that seem indispensable, it is perhaps worth while in America to consider what the Germans are contending for: the management of schools by educators without interference either from ignorant citizens, even if they be officers of the State, or from pedagogically untrained and inexperienced pastors. Reukauf boldly asserts that the school can be freed from the oppressive influence of 'Bureaukratismus' and the Church "only by a thorough reform of the entire school-management, only by freeing the school completely from the supremacy of the Church, and by developing its organization freely according to its own distinctive nature." (*Didaktik,* 15.) In America we know nothing of a supremacy of the Church, but we do know that the school is as yet very imperfectly organized and managed, and

that a clear recognition of educational principles and needs is exceedingly rare, even among teachers themselves. The reform must come by raising the standard of our teachers, making them to be educators, requiring that they be pedagogically trained and able to cope with the problems of their profession.

Beyond this it is difficult for us to go. Even a thoroughly trained and experienced educator tells us, that he has no completed scheme of reform in his pocket: "he who comes with such a scheme does not recognize the historical factor in our educational system, promises more than he can fulfill, and is—consciously or unconsciously—a charlatan." (Th. Ziegler, *Allgemeine Pädagogik,* 4.)

FOR THE HEALING OF THE CHURCH

For the Healing of the Church

A GERMAN writer has described present-day conditions in philosophy thus: "To-day we have no single philosophical stream, which commands all the others, or receives them all into itself as contributory streams, and guides them into one mighty channel; but numerous streams of thought which flow on in their own strength, regardless of whence and whither, as if they were alone on the earth." "We are fertile in the coining of useable, attractive formulas, but hip-shot in the production of full-grown systems and deep philosophies. One world-formula chases the other in confusing restlessness." "We lack a central personality, a Leibniz or a Kant."

It seems that the sectarianism so prominent in the Church has found its way into philosophy. The 'schools,' many in number and with comparatively few adherents to each, remind one strongly of the 'sects,' which spring up so rapidly that none has an opportunity to grow strong.

But there are vital differences between schools of philosophy and sects in religion. In philosophy a strong personality may succeed in forming a new school which shall swallow up or wipe out the older schools, as some reviewers tell us that Bergson is apt to do. The Church needs more than a 'central personality,' if the sects are to be united. One consideration will suffice to suggest

the reason. Philosophy and philosophical schools have never been outwardly organized, as the Church and the sects have been. To break up a philosophical school it is enough that a new leader gain the adherence of the philosophers composing it, or that the old leader lose their adherence; but a religious sect has a permanent organization, which may remain in spite of a change of leader and a change in teaching.

Like a political party, the sect may lose all or almost all the distinctive features which were its justification at first, and yet retain all its opposition to the party it opposed because of them.

The political analogy suggests a deeper difference, however. Political parties stand for different views on problems which no higher authority has solved. But higher than the party is the State. Each party knows that it is the party and not the State. But each sect may claim to be *the* Church. The political party serves the State, and the State is a definite organization apart from the party. But the sect serves the Kingdom of God, and that is not organized here on earth, so that each can claim to be the only representative, or at least the only true representative of it on earth.

This is indeed the characteristic mark of the sect, which has given rise to the name and odium of sectarianism. It is the denial of the many-sidedness of truth, the claim that in one formula all truth can be expressed for all time, and that no other expression can be given to it; that truth, to be seen at all, must be seen from one angle and from no other. Take this attitude from a sect, and the evil feature

of it is gone. But so is also the right of any one Church to claim for itself that it is the Church. There are no longer sects, but Churches. Each may claim that it, more than the others, sees clearly what the Kingdom of God is and ought to be on earth, yet none can claim to be the Kingdom of God on earth.

Viewed in this light, the responsibility for sectarianism lies with that Church which first organized as the Kingdom of God on earth, and insisted upon the right to be that Kingdom of God in spite of all aberration from the standards of the Kingdom. If we ask: What led it into such aberration? the answer is simple. It raised a non-fundamental element to the position of a fundamental element, and gradually came to consider it the essential element.

This has been the history of Churches ever since. The characteristic and distinctive doctrines have been debatable, but have been for that very reason turned into dogmas. The Primacy of Peter, the Apostolic Succession, the form of organization, presbyterial, congregational, episcopal, the mode of Baptism, the method of Conversion, the relation of the Sunday to the Sabbath: these are the distinctive dogmas of the organized Churches. The interpretation of the Lord's Supper, the mark and seal of the unity of the Church has become the cause of great separations, the occasion, it might almost be said, of all the modern sects, or Churches.

There is however another side to the history of Churches. There have been times of wanton sect-founding, but the large majority of Churches have grown out

of a protest against an error or a lack in the Church. Around this protest have grown up other peculiarities, due to the separation and the necessity of building up a distinctive Church life. This distinctive life is a far greater barrier to Church union than the distinctive doctrines. For after all the doctrines are largely a matter of the schools and the pastors, but the life divides the people.

In theory it would be easy to criticise the Church for allowing these separations. Unquestionably no State would do what the Church has done. And yet political narrowness has not been unknown. A democrat has little hope in Russia. And just as Russia cannot endure a democrat, so the Church cannot endure within it a body of men who deny the distinctive doctrine of the Church. The Reformers could not stay in the Church of Rome, after they denied the very facts on which the Church of Rome was built. The Presbyterians could not stay in the Church of England, when they denied the rights of bishops, upon which that Church was founded. And in each case the older organization could not accept the criticism without ceasing to be what it had grown to be, and so denying the element of truth contained in its own organization. The Church has needed both the position and the criticism.

And the Church has always needed two other elements: authority and freedom. The co-ordination of these two has been its real problem, and it is still unsolved.

Authority is of two kinds: the one attaches to a class or a person or an institution, and is claimed as a right; the other is given freely because of inherent worth. The

one is the authority of an aristocracy, the other the authority of democracy. Historically the aristocratic conception has grown out of the democratic. A man or an institution was acknowledged by the people because of some inherent appeal, and then this acknowledgment was demanded as an inherent right. This progress from inherent worth to inherent right, from the appeal to men's judgment to the silencing of men's judgment, seems inevitable. In the Church it is inseparable from the necessity of organization. No Church can be organized without some principles of organization, and no Church can be maintained without holding fast to the principles upon which it was organized. The free confession of the fathers becomes the binding obligation of the sons; the son who rejects it is considered a renegade.

The Churches which have organized on the principle of aristocratic authority, the State Churches,—and the Roman Church is still a State Church in theory,—are the more uniform and least divided in organization, but can permit a greater divergency of doctrinal position than the democratic Churches. The latter are erratic in organization, but conservative in doctrine; when they lose this conservatism in doctrine, the very foundations of their being are shaken, there is left only an organization which knows not what to do.

The aristocratic Church is theoretically always a State Church. Even in America the Church of Rome must claim authority over all the people of the State, and the high-Church Episcopalian must assert a like authority. It readily falls into the evils of formalism and ceremon-

ialism.

The democratic Church must maintain its standard of worthiness, or lose the support and respect of men. The very differences which have split it into fragments, must be such as to deserve respect from the body of the Churches. Then the Churches can continue in their separate existence, and yet be mutually helpful and co-operative. The recognition that no Church is the Kingdom of God, but that all are of the Kingdom, this is the great truth which each needs to learn, that all may grow to be one in purpose, although divided in methods and in organization.

This will require, it may be, a change in the educational work of our Churches. Most of the Churches in our country, although manifestly democratic in their principles and in their origin, are aristocratic in their methods. The fear of losing men has led them to shield men from problems: it has brought them to the teaching of results to be accepted on authority, rather than to the investigation of problems, and so to the formation of intelligent convictions. They have come to the people with a claim to be heard and believed, rather than with that attitude of reasonableness, which says: "Come, let us reason together." And it has been this attitude, not supported by the aristocratic theory of the State Church, which has been the weakness of Protestantism and the fertile soil of sects.

In our day the suggestion is frequently heard, that the remedy will be found in a secularisation of the Church, that is, the Church must become a social force, or at least

more a social force and less a religious force. It must appeal less to the individual, more to the classes: draw men, not one by one, but by societies and unions. It must, perhaps the matter can be put thus, preach less duty, more rights. It must learn from the French Revolution, and not solely from the Bible. And many there are who find the teachings of the French Revolution in the Bible.

Almost a hundred years ago the theologian and philosopher whose influence can be traced throughout the whole century suggested another remedy: "We should not have so much occasion to complain of the increasing spirit of sectarianism and factious pious associations, if there were not so many ministers who do not understand man's religious needs and emotions, because their stand-point is in general too low. Hence come also the paltry views which are frequently uttered, when men speak of the means by which the so-called decay of religion is to be remedied. It is an opinion, which will perhaps find little approval, but which I cannot keep back, that the best remedy for this evil would be nothing else than a deeper speculative education. But the need of such education is not admitted by most ministers and those who superintend the education of ministers, because of the delusion, that it would make ministers only so much more impractical."

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